

What is claimed is:

generating workstation security credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation to identify security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the workstation on the computer network;

authorizing access to the network service by the workstation if
15 the workstation security credentials satisfy the workstation security policy, otherwise
denying access to the network service by the workstation.

3. The computer-implemented process recited by Claim 1, wherein the step of generating the workstation security credentials comprises completing the vulnerability assessment of the workstation by a local workstation assessment service maintained on the workstation, the local workstation assessment service operative to generate the workstation security credentials.

4. The computer-implemented process recited by Claim 3,
30 wherein the workstation security policy is maintained on the workstation, the process
further comprising the step of providing the workstation security credentials from the
local workstation assessment service to the workstation security policy.

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a local workstation assessment service, operative on the workstation, for generating workstation security credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation to identify security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the workstation on the computer network; and

the local workstation assessment service further operative for comparing the workstation security credentials to the workstation security policy to determine whether the workstation should be granted access to the network service,

the local workstation assessment service further operative to
15 authorize access to the network service by the workstation if the workstation security
credentials satisfy the workstation security policy.

5 a local workstation assessment service, operative on the workstation, for generating workstation security credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation to identify security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the workstation on the computer network; and

14. The network security system recited by Claim 13 further
15 comprising a workstation security policy at the network server, the workstation
security policy operative to define security requirements for secure operation of the
workstation on the computer network.

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the network service operative to generate workstation security
5 credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation to identify
security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the
workstation on the computer network;

17. The network security system recited by Claim 16 further comprising a workstation security policy at the network server, the workstation security policy operative to define security requirements for secure operation of the workstation on the computer network.

18. The network security system recited by Claim 17, wherein the network service is further operative to compare the workstation security credentials to the workstation security policy to determine whether the workstation should be granted access to the software service, the network service operative to authorize access to the software service by the workstation if the workstation security credentials satisfy the workstation security policy.

issuing a request for a log-in page to a network server from a
5 browser operating on the workstation;

transmitting the workstation security credentials from the authentication plug-in to the network server via the computer network; and

20. The computer-implemented process recited by Claim 19 wherein the step of determining whether the workstation should be granted access to the software service comprises the step of the CGI script comparing the workstation security credentials to a workstation security policy maintained at the network server to determine whether the workstation should be granted access to the software service;

25 if the workstation security credentials satisfies the workstation security policy, then authorizing access to the software service and directing the browser to the log-in page via the computer network,

otherwise, denying access to the software service and delivering an access denied page to the workstation via the computer network.

5 a network assessment service operating on a network workstation assessment server on the computer network, the network assessment service operative to generate workstation security credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation via the computer network to identify security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the workstation on the computer network,

15 22. The network security system recited by Claim 21 further comprising a workstation security policy at the network server, the workstation security policy operative to define security requirements for secure operation of the workstation on the computer network.

24. The network security system recited by Claim 21, wherein the network service is operative to transmit to the network assessment service via the computer network a request to complete the vulnerability assessment of the workstation in response to receiving a request for the software service from the workstation.

25. A computer-implemented process for authenticating a workstation requesting a network service from a network server via a computer network, comprising the steps:

5 issuing a request for a log-in page to a network server from a browser operating on the workstation;

transmitting the log-in page, an authentication plug-in, and a workstation policy from the network server to the workstation via the computer network, the authentication plug-in installable within the browser and operative to generate workstation security credentials by completing a vulnerability assessment of the workstation to identify security vulnerabilities that would compromise the secure operation of the workstation on the computer network;

10 comparing the workstation security credentials to the workstation policy on the workstation to determine whether the workstation should be granted access to a software service of the network.

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